

CONTEMPORARY CONCEPTUAL ART IS CREATING CONCEPTS, IDEAS, COLLABORATING AND COMMUNICATING AROUND THE WORLD

I was invited by www.studiobeirut.org, to participate and work with a team of architects on a theme called PUBLIC SPACE? Investigation into the potential to reinvent public space as a concept and as a physical fact in a city where its current existence is ambiguous. **Beirut, Lebanon August 17- August 31, 2007**

Lebanon is one of those places in the world where everyday reality is stipulated by history colliding with geography. The whole country is a reservoir of minorities (religious and ethnic) coexisting in one of today's most bitter spaces of conflict i.e. the Middle East.

Years of war followed by years of occupation have led to a situation where the country functions in a very peculiar way: The citizen-state relationship is loose to a point where the economy, the juridical status, the urban status, the ecological status, the social status and the political discourse are all in shambles, causing a series of malfunctions in various activities and aspects of life. Public space in Lebanon is to a great extent at the heart of this crisis.

Is public space is a matter of urban locations where people can park their cars, stroll along the seaside and get the occasional cup of coffee or is it a space where "significant events" like economical, social and political discussions may occur? Questions and dialogues that have been elaborated on are; Is Public Space a radical concept? What traditional uses or concepts exist in Lebanese society about Public Space? How urban is Beirut? What about the post civil war generation? How do internet, globalization and satellite television influence the city? Is living and growing up in Lebanon a sectarian experience? How do the social corridors function? How does Lebanon influence personal attitudes and behavior? How does this interact with the physical make up of the city? What are the political and economical opportunities for creating?

PUBLIC SPACE?

Are public space and identity politics social protagonists? In what way is real estate politics intervening with the development of Public Space? How does Public Space work as a binding factor inside communities and as an integrating factor in between neighborhoods? Is the latter present?

The difference between Lebanese public space and community space.

PROJECT: HAPPINESS IS A STATE OF MIND

As I have experienced the city through people's experience/private space and transformed it into public space. One of the several projects I came up with was, a project called 'silhouette', since 2002, where movement, light and shadow reacts in transformation of one 's visual notion of life.

The concept is of elaborating on an existing Aruban cultural

statement.

In Aruba we embrace these words every day. "Aruba One Happy Island" we drive the city and island around with these words attached to our car, our vehicle that assist us every where we go. We share these words on the complete territory. We spread a shield of hope towards the island with these words. It can be an invisible space where the mind accepts a conscious or unconscious availability towards responsibility and accepting a positive attitude towards our home. Happiness is a state of mind. Lebanon one happy land", could be the next place to introduce this statement.

The medium of concept is photography and is installed at the Dutch Embassy, Mrs. Nelleke Kruijs Voorberge.

I believe and suggest that as we are in a transformation of our own city 'Oranjestad', it would be an interesting way of working with these updates, together with our local architects and artists. These workshops are all about networking and collaborating with each other. ■

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Organized by; directors: Bernard Mallat (architect, AUB), Nabil enhem, (architect, urban planner) Michael Stanton (architect) With the additional contribution of: Hani Asfour (systems navigator, architect) Ole Bouman (Dutch Architectural Institute), Lilet Breddels (Archis/Volume) Steve Campbell: (AUB, project coordinator/urbanist), Tony Chakar (architect, ALBA), Antoine Charbel (UL), Maroun el Daccache (architect, LAU), Hassan Choubassi visual artist, LIU), Timur el Daccache (architect, AUB), Jaap Graber: (architect, Claus en Kaan), Mohammad Hajj (UL), Pierre Hajj Boutros (USEK), Andrew Herscher (University of Michigan), Joumana al Jabri: (architect), Sany Jamal (President of the Architects Section - OEA), Joy Kanaan (architect, AUB) Kamal Mouzawak (Souk el Tayeb), Ole Moystad/L.E.F.T. Architects (architects, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Yale School of Architecture and Penn Design at UPenn), Partizan Publik, Pearl foundation, Mousbah Rajab (UL), Jan Rothuizen (artist), Robert Saliba (AUB), Studio Beirut, Leon Telvizian (UL), Martijn van Tol (University of Amsterdam/Amsterdam Centre for Conflictstudies) With a financial contribution of: > Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Beirut, > Claus en Kaan Architecten, > ARGUS, students association, Architectural faculty, TU Delft, > The Order of Engineers and Architects, Beirut, For more information about the initiators and organizers see also: www.studiobeirut.org / www.archis.org / www.partizanpublik.nl www.pearl-foundation.com



BIOGRAPHY

Osaira Muyale is a contemporary artist living and working in Aruba..Studied at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam. Co founder of a studio- gallery called "Eterno" 1993-2002 and a foundation called Fundacion Eterno. from 1996-2007. She has exhibited in Europe, the United States, Latin American ,China, Middle East and the Caribbean. Her work has been included in prestigious exhibitions such as the 6th International Biennial of Havana, Cuba, Biennial de Cuenca, Biennial de Santo Domingo, Arte 99 of Curacao (won the Grand award) and Arco Art Fair Madrid, well known art fair. Has been invited at several workshops around the world. Muyale's work is critically acclaimed and received prizes not only from institutions in the region but continues to gather attention from the local, regional and international art critics and acclaimed art connoisseurs. Muyale's studio is part of her ongoing dedication and promise to interact with the community and her conceptual work is a beacon of light to all those intellectuals and artists that live on the island. From there, she continues her work with international artists and local and regional educators reaching out to her community and continuing to intrigue the public with her unique work.

Elvine Topac, Art Curator New York